

Alice M. Blount, Ph.D.

Mineralogist

April 23, 1998

M. Raymond Hatcher
MEHAFFY & WEBER
2615 Calder Avenue
P.O. Box 16
Beaumont, Texas 77704

RECEIVED

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MEHAFFY & WEBER
BEAUMONT, TEXAS

Dear Mr. Hatcher:

According to your letter of March 31, 1998, I have written and enclosed a report on the occurrence, regulation and up-to-date scientific view of asbestos, amphiboles and "intermediate" fibers. I have also enclosed copies of my 1990 and 1991 papers, one of which I am sure that you already have. The 1991 paper was written because I became aware that it was a common opinion among industrial hygienists that industrial talcs were better than pharmaceutical and cosmetic talcs because there was a regulation for the former and not for the latter. I knew that this was not the case and wanted to set the record straight.

Although my papers report an improved method for analysis, the determinations for the sample labeled *I* (Johnson & Johnson's Vermont talc) have been done by the traditional methods as well (see Table 2, page 567 in the 1990 paper). As I told you, I believe that Johnson & Johnson's Vermont talc contains trace amounts of asbestos which are well below those specified by OSHA. It should be noted that the proposed FDA regulation, which was never finalized, also specified the same 0.1% limit for amphibole asbestos as OSHA.

I may be away for short periods during the coming weeks, but I do check for messages on my work phone at the number you have been using.

Sincerely yours,



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